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ANTIQUITIES OF BHIMBAR AND
RAJAURI

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PREFACE.

Bhimbar and Rajaurī (which together formed part of the ancient territory of Dārvābhisāra) are two large Tahsils in the province of Jammu. The town of Bhimbar is situated only four or five miles from the British boundary and twenty-eight miles from Gujrāt, which is the most convenient Railway Station for it, though the small flag station of Khāriān is nearer. The word "convenient" is used in a strictly limited sense, for the road is mostly unmetalled and becomes in wet weather a regular quagmire. The absence of bridges, moreover, forces both horse and man to resort to the primitive method of wading across the streams. The journey is usually performed in seven hours, provided, of course, the lean and footsore ponies do not hopelessly break down in the middle of the road, or the roofless, ramshackle affair humourously called the "Mail Tonga" does not get inextricably stuck in the bed of a nallah.

The Bhimbar-Rajaurī road, which, after crossing the Pīr Pantsāl Pass at an altitude of 11,500 feet, debouches into the valley of Kashmir at the picturesque little town of Shupayan, is by far the shortest road to Srinagar from the Indian plains. It has from very ancient times played a prominent part in the political history of Kashmir. Mihirakula of infamous memory, after his defeat in India, retreated into Kashmir by this route. But his misfortunes had not tamed his cruel disposition. One of his elephants accidentally fell down a precipice into the raging torrent below. On hearing the agonised cry of the unfortunate beast, the tyrant was so delighted that he immediately had a hundred other elephants driven headlong down the precipice to join the chorus. The place where this incident occurred is still known by the name of Hastivanz. Śūra, the minister of Avantivarman, built the town Śūrapura (the modern Hurapōr) to serve both as a frontier outpost and an emporium for trade. In Kālhaṇa's own time Pushyānanāḍa (the modern Pushyānā) "served as a refuge for rebel leaders for whom Kashmir had become too hot." Rajaurī (the ancient Rājapurī) was the capital of the hill principality of the same name, and its rulers were occasionally powerful enough to threaten the peace of Kashmir. Coming down to more recent times we find the road elevated to the dignity of an Imperial Mughal route, furnished with sumptuous rest-houses at every stage, and witnessing almost annually the splendid cavalcade of Jahāngīr, Nūr Jahān and the nobles of the court, hurrying to escape the scorching heat and blinding dust-storms of the Punjab. And lastly, less than a hundred years ago, the present chapter of Kashmir history opened with the crossing of the Pīr Pantsāl Pass by the Sikh army to reduce the valley of Kashmir, an attempt which was crowned with complete success.

For the traveller who possesses a fair knowledge of the ancient and modern history of Kashmir, the Pīr Pāntsal route conjures up a host of departed memories and he feels

“Like one who treads alone
Some banquet hall deserted;
Whose lights are fled, whose garlands dead;
And all but he departed.”



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ANTIQUITIES OF BHIMBAR AND RAJAURI

ANCIENT REMAINS AT BHIMBAR.

THE town of Bhimbar, as graphically described by Bernier, is "situated at the foot of a steep, black and scorched mountain. We are encamped in the dry bed of a considerable torrent, upon pebbles and burning sands,—a very furnace"; and it still merits its sinister reputation. A couple of miles to the north begins the ascent of the first of those mountain ramparts which so effectually separate Kashmir from the plains of the Punjab. As might have been expected, the town, though small, is comparatively rich in mementoes of the Mughal occupation.

The Hammām (Plate Ia). The first object that attracts the notice of the traveller when he leaves the Dak Bungalow for the town is an extremely dilapidated hammām. It is reported to have been built at the instance of Mirzā Murād for the convenience of the harem of Akbar, which the Emperor left here while he himself proceeded to Kashmir. There is a well adjoining it which seems to have had communication with the hammām.

The Tomb in the fields opposite the hammām on the right side of the road (Plate Ib). This is a square structure with a domed roof supposed to have covered the remains of a prince royal who died here during Akbar's absence in Kashmir. It has three openings on three sides, the fourth, that on the west, being closed up.

The Sarāi (Plate IIa). This sarāi now accommodates the Tahsil and the Police Station. It has been so largely and so thoroughly altered, that it would be impossible to restore it to anything like its original shape. It consists, like every other building of a similar nature, of a courtyard surrounded on all sides by rows of cells. The entrance was and is still at the middle of one of these sides. Besides other additions and alterations a building for the local Treasury has been erected in the centre of the courtyard.

The Mosque. There is a mosque opposite to the sarāi, but this too has been so largely altered that it is difficult to recognise it as a Mughal building.

Bāoli. This bāoli, which is nowadays owned by Kirpa Ram, son of Gandamal, had become choked up and was re-excavated some 40 years ago by the present owner.

Mosque to the north of Bhimbar on the nālā opposite to the town. This is a small mosque with a façade of three arches. The outer face has suffered by constant exposure to the weather. Originally it was covered with painted floral designs which still exist in remarkable freshness on the inner walls (Plate IIb), where they were protected from the inclemency of the weather. The lower part of the mural decoration consists of a dado divided into panels of dark red colour, fringed with minutely worked floral scrolls. The façade of the arches, their intrados, pendentives, etc., are covered with painted cypresses, palms and various other trees and flowers, natural and conventional. The whole surface is glazed. There are two windows at the sides, which originally possessed brick screens with star-shaped perforations. The core of the structure consists of rubble stones built in lime, over which was applied a thick coat of lime *bajri*, which was in turn covered by a thinner layer of gypsum. This last served as the back-ground of the paintings.

Mosque of Rājā Sultan Khān (Plate IIIa). This, again, is a structure with a front of three arches. The intervening spaces are rather too wide for the short span. The two front corners are surmounted by two miniature minarets. Still smaller turrets surmount the jambs of the central arch. The roof consists of three domes. The middle one, which is the largest, is ribbed outside. The mosque is built chiefly of rubble stones in lime and was originally coated with lime and *surkhī* plaster. There appear to be some traces of plaster decoration on the central dome inside. The northern portion has fallen down and the rest bids fair to follow suit in a few years' time.

SAIDABAD.

Tham Wālī Bāolī. About 2½ miles south of Saīdābād, on the left side of the main road before crossing the *nālā*, is what is locally known as the Tham Wālī Bāolī. It consists of two compartments, an antechamber and the chamber enclosing the well. The former is completely ruined, but the latter is fairly intact. The walls enclosing the well are horizontally divided into four dados, the two uppermost of which are adorned with figure sculpture. These dados are marked off by projecting torus courses. The entrance to the well faces north. It consists of an opening divided into three sections by two columns ornamented with carved spirals and scrolls and surmounted by bracket capitals. These two pillars support the lintel, the under-surface of which is carved with one full blown and two half-blown lotuses. The walls of the outer chamber, in the parts that exist, are also adorned with figure sculpture, elephants with riders, horses and horsemen, *makaras*, etc., etc. The stone employed is the ordinary soft sandstone found in the neighbourhood.

Saīdābād is the second stage on the Bhimbar-Rajaurī road. It is situated in the middle of a picturesque valley encircled by pine-clad hills. On one of these, to the east, stands the fortress of Amargarh, said to have been built during the reign of Mahārāja Gulāb Singh, probably to overawe the turbulent Chib Rajput tribes of the neighbourhood.

By far the most imposing building that one notices on descending to the level

ground is the Mughal *sarāi* (Plate X).¹ Unlike the one at Bhimbar this *sarāi* still retains a good deal of its original shape and design. It comprises two square courts, one opening into the other. The eastern court is a mere walled enclosure with its entrance in the middle of the north wall. It has a *dālān* with a façade of three arches in the middle of the west wall. This *dālān* and the rooms of the *sarāi* immediately behind appear to have had a second storey. It is possible that these were the apartments reserved for the Emperor himself. The second court consists of a quadrangle with rows of cells on all the four sides. These cells have arched openings. The two massive entrances surmounted by miniature ornamental turrets stand opposite to each other in the middle of the north and south walls.

Outside the north wall is a row of shops with an arcaded front built by the Emperor for the caterers to his camp, and near it is a small mosque.

Even in its ruin, the *sarāi* is an impressive memorial of the Mughal power, but it must have presented a far more impressive spectacle when crowds of grandees attended by armed retainers thronged the courtyard, their faces turned to the *dālān* from which the Emperor was to make his exit, and when the long line of elephants, horses and porters innumerable, threaded the way towards the happy valley. The only other Mughal remains here are the ruins of a tank, a wall or two and a broken gateway near the Dak Bungalow, which are said to represent the *zanāna* buildings and their adjuncts.

Hindu Remains. About half a mile to the south-west of the *sarāi* stand a couple of ancient Hindu temples, a well and other foundations, which appear to be contemporaneous with the temples. A feature of considerable interest about these monuments is that they faithfully represent the traditions of ancient Kashmir art. The larger (Plate IIIb), which is the one further to the west, stands on a basement, only the top course of which—a filleted *cyma recta*—is visible. It is surrounded by a peristyle of which the plinth only is extant. The facts that the gateway of the peristyle as well as the entrance to the temple face to the north, and that the figure of Gaṇeśa is carved on the door lintel of the smaller temple (Plate VIIIb) called temple B for convenience, lead one to surmise that the fanes were originally dedicated to the worship of Siva. The pilasters which flank the stair leading up to the sanctum are covered with sculpture, as is so often the case in the temples of the valley proper. From a constructional point of view it is interesting to observe that the theory advanced by some, and rejected by others, that Kashmirian temples were built dry and without mortar, is finally disposed of by the presence of strong lime mortar in the masonry of this temple. In Kashmir the joints of the masonry are so neat that mortar is rarely visible. But here, owing to the width of the joints, it appears prominently on the surface.

A departure from the style of other Kashmirian temples, due, no doubt, to climatic exigencies, is the provision of ventilation apertures in the upper foil of the trefoiled arches on the three sides of the sanctum.

¹ The drawings of the Mughal *sarāis* published in this memoir (Plates IX, X and XIb) have been copied from the original drawings in pencil kindly supplied by R. B. Sardar Ganda Singh of the State Public Works Department.

The discovery of this temple removes another uncertainty also. Occasionally a thick coat of lime, much disfigured and corroded, has been found clinging to the surface of stone walls of temples, notably in the Bāṇḍī temple near Uri. It was not certain whether this was originally applied by the architects themselves or whether it was merely the effect of the overheating of the lime-stone when the temples were destroyed by fire. The example of this temple (A) decides in favour of the first hypothesis; for, not only does the coat of *chūnam* exist in several places in all its freshness, but even the details of the decoration are plainly seen. The sculptures and the architectural features were first blocked out in the stone of which the temple was built; then the finer details were finished off in lime plaster; and it is probable that the more delicate details, such as the eyes, eyebrows, nails, hair, etc., were also painted in.

Taken as a whole, the discovery of these temples is of great importance, for the only other temples of Kashmirian style found outside the valley, are the few in the Jhelum District. This group thus furnishes another link connecting the art of the valley with that of the plains of India.¹

To the east of temple B is a deep well with sides built of dressed stones.

SAIDABAD TO NAUSHERA.

About a mile from Saidābād on the left bank of the *nālā* are the remains of a *bārādārī*, a bridge and a tank. It is said that this was once the halting place of the Imperial Zanāna, and that the ladies were so charmed with the limpid water of the stream and the enchanting surroundings, that they refused to stir either forwards or backwards. The Emperor was in a dilemma. Persuasion failing, he had recourse to a stratagem, similar to that employed by the hill Rajas of Pinjor to scare away Fidāi Khan, Aurangzeb's foster brother, who had built himself a retreat there. A number of local ladies who were afflicted with goitre were brought together. They were made to wait upon the Imperial harem. When questioned about the cause of their common disfigurement they replied that it was the evil effect of the water of the stream that flowed near by. They added that before they had the misfortune to be married in these parts, they too were fair and handsome. This, as was expected, had the desired effect. The ladies immediately ordered a retreat, and the dilemma was solved.

Proceeding on a short distance, one meets on the right side of the road a natural rock with a smooth vertical face on which have been carved a number of images, that of Gaṇeśa being specially prominent. The other figures could not be identified, as they were covered with moss and I had no means of cleaning them.

¹From time immemorial Kashmir had intimate relations with Dārvābhisāra (as the modern district of Bhimbar, Rajauri and some other adjacent tracts were then called). Kalhana (Stein's translation of the *Rajatarangini*, I, verse 180) states that "as deep snow was falling every year to cause distress to the Baudhdhas, the King [Abhimanyu I] resided for six months in the cold season in Dārvābhisāra and in other (neighbouring regions)." During the reigns of the weak and short-lived rulers who preceded Avantivarman on the Kashmir throne, this territory was lost; but Śankaravarman (A.D. 883-902) not only recovered it but added a part of the kingdom of Gurjara (modern Gujrat) to his dominions. Ratnādēvi, a queen of Jayasimha (A.D. 1128-55), "built also in Dārvābhisāra a town called after her, which was the home of the king's noble generosity, and which rivalled the city of Indra." These facts easily explain the existence of Kashmirian temples in these regions.

The road then winds along the edge of the gurgling *nālā* through picturesque ravines and well-wooded mountain slopes. Leaving the modern highway on my right I followed the old Mughal road which crosses the mountains over the Hāthinalā pass. This road is shorter but more difficult. The Hāthinalā derives its name from a couple of gigantic stone elephants (one male and the other female) carved out of the living rock. The first—the female (Plate IVa)—sits on a double platform, the upper portion of which is rock-cut. The eastern face of this platform is divided into five panels surmounted by a frieze and cornice carved in low relief. On the western are two flights of steps parallel to the platform and terminating on the same landing. The available space on either side is carved in the same way as the eastern face. The northern side (the one towards which the elephant faces) has a semicircular projection in the middle and is divided into five panels. The two end panels have cypresses carved on them, and next to these are two Mughal lancers fully accoutred. The central and largest panel is ornamented with a flower-and-vase decoration. These panels are surmounted by a frieze and cornice similar to that on the other sides. Above sits the elephant, which is, unhappily, much mutilated. This time, however, it is nature and not man that is responsible; for this destruction, it is said, was caused by a flash of lightning which struck both the elephants. The female was shorn of its head and ruap, which are lying shattered on the ground below. The body has been struck in the middle and both it and the rock-cut platform underneath, are split into two. Both elephants sit at ease, their forelegs projecting in front, and furnish another illustration of that wonderful skill which Indian artists have from time immemorial displayed in the portrayal of these animals. The rings round their ankles, the ornamental chains round their necks, the bells hanging from their girths, and the very nails of their massive feet, all show the perfect mastery of the artists in their craft. The haunches of the Mahaut of the female elephant are still extant. Facing the female and sitting in a similar posture, at a distance of a hundred feet or so, is the male elephant (Plate IVb) on a double platform. In this case the upper platform is not wholly rock-cut. Its sides are divided into ordinary rectangular panels surmounted by a course of lotus petals carved in stone. Fortunately, Nature has not dealt so harshly with this creature as it has with its companion opposite. It is entire, except for the trunk, which has fallen, and the Mahaut, whose head and chest are broken off.

Originally, both these animals were covered with a thin coat of fine lime painted in colours. Traces of lime as well as of paint still exist. Both the elephants had stone slabs bearing inscriptions embedded with tenons into their throats. One of these is missing, but the other has been preserved and is now in the custody of the Nambardārs. As it is not safe to leave this record in the hands of the local hillmen, I am taking steps to have it taken to the Srinagar Museum.

It is difficult to divine the purpose of the erection of these statues here, unless it be that they were intended to serve as memorials to two favourite elephants of the Emperor who probably met their end here. If this be so—and there is no great improbability in the conjecture, the memorial statue

which Akbar erected to his horse near Sikandra being an analogous case—Jāhangīr¹ could not have chosen a better site than this. Situated three quarters of the way up the hill, it commands a view of singular beauty, flanked to right and left by mountain spurs whose summits are covered with dense pine forests, and whose slopes descend in rippling terraces of green wheat; far below is the thin white streak which marks the course of the foaming torrent, and above, the deep blue translucent sky with its everchanging aspect—a spot of truly Alpine grandeur and a fitting place for the Emperor to commemorate the death of his dumb favourites.

After bidding adieu to these noble beasts we reached the summit by dint of half-an-hour's arduous climb. From this point began an almost vertical and exceedingly perilous descent,² especially dangerous if, as happened in my case, it happens to rain, when the bare rock becomes slippery in the extreme, and a misplaced step means broken limbs if not loss of life.

Bāolī. Half a mile this side of Naushera is an ancient *bāolī* on the right hand side of the road. It is built entirely of massive stone blocks and contains an inscription which is so defaced that nothing can be made out of it. But for the pointed brick arch of the entrance, I would unhesitatingly ascribe it to the old Hindu times; though it is possible that the arch belongs to a later repair.

NAUSHERA.

Bāolī. The *bāolī* of *Shāh Jahān* is situated within the compound of the Dak Bungalow at Naushera. The first flight of steps terminates in a landing from which two footpaths lead to a domed chamber communicating with two similar chambers through narrow vaulted passages. Each of these three rooms has a window which opens on the well. A few feet above the central window is a large inscribed stone slab, the surface of which has partly peeled off, but the name of *Shāh Jahān* is clearly visible. Access to the central chamber can also be gained from the top of the well by means of two narrow stairs covered by small arched entrances. The second flight of steps leads through an arched passage into a somewhat spacious domed chamber which during winter and the rains is full of water, but which in the hot weather, when the water recedes, affords the villagers and passers-by a delightfully cool refuge from the scorching sun.

Sarāi. Less than half a mile from the Dak Bungalow is the *sarāi* of Naushera. It is a more spacious and imposing building than either of the *sarāis* mentioned above, and different from them both in that it comprises two enclosures, one within the other. The outer is a high wall with bastions and

¹ Jāhangīr himself records that at Jāhangīrpur "had been erected by my order a *manār* at the head of the grave of an antelope called *Manssāj*. On a stone of that *manār* was carved this prose composition written by Mulla Muhammad Husain of Kashmir, who was the chief of the elegant writers of the day, On account of the rare quality of this antelope I commanded that no person should hunt the deer of this plain and that their flesh should be to Hindus and Muhammadans as is the flesh of cows and pigs. They made the grave stone in the shape of an antelope." *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*: translated by Rogers and Beveridge, pp. 90-91.

² I learnt later that instead of keeping to the high road I had followed a goat track.

crenellated battlements. A part of the southern face has fallen. In the middle of the western wall is the gateway, a noble pile, peculiarly interesting inasmuch as this is the only Mughal building in Kashmir which contains the square stone pillars surmounted by bracket capitals ornamented with bulbous pendants, so common in the Jāhangīrī Mahall at Agra and Akbar's buildings at Fatehpur Sikri—a fact which in itself is sufficient to stamp the *sarāi* as the work either of Akbar, or of his son, Jahāngir. This conjecture is confirmed by Baron Hügel who visited Kashmir in A.D. 1835. In describing this *sarāi* he states that it was "an extensive building of bricks, faced at the gateway with stone and constructed so as to answer the double purpose of a *sarāi* and a fort. It was built by Emperor Akbar, as an inscription on the gateway records, but was now in ruins." Unfortunately this inscription is now completely defaced. The inner surface of the wall is adorned with shallow arched recesses.

At the south-western corner of this enclosure is the *sarāi* proper. Its entrance is situated in the middle of the north wall. It consists of a quadrangle of arched cells facing a common courtyard and is essentially similar to other edifices of the same nature. What strikes one as strange is the curious position it occupies. It is built at an angle, and none of its walls are parallel to the outer enclosure wall. It is possible that its construction was an afterthought; or it may be that the outer wall is a later construction, though the latter is hardly likely, as the entrance stands right on the high way leading to Kashmir. There is a small mosque in the outer enclosure midway between the entrance and the modern offices of the Nāib Tahsildār. It is not of any interest and leaks badly.

Opposite to the gateway of the outer wall is a mosque of more imposing dimensions with a front of three arches and surmounted by six domes, the middle one of the back row being taller than the rest. I was not able to examine its interior, as it is now used for residential quarters. The inner *sarāi* is in use as a lock-up for cattle by the police Thāna and is extremely filthy. The smaller mosque serves as a convenient godown for the storage of grass.

On inquiry from the Nāib Tahsildār I was informed that in Mauza Mangal Dēi, Morā Sēri, Sub-Division Naushera, there exists an ancient temple similar to the one I found at Saidābād. If so, then the influence of Kashmir in these parts was not so desultory and intermittent in the later mediæval period as is generally believed. He also informed me that in Mauza Kalsiān, in the same Sub-Division, there is a place called Pāndvēn, which formerly possessed ancient remains. These were demolished by a Diwān of Raja Johar Singh who built a new temple here out of the old materials. It was to my great regret that I had, on account of insufficiency of time, to forego the pleasure of visiting these sites.

NAUSHERA TO CHINGAS.

Sarāi at Nādpur. About four miles from Naushera is a walled enclosure with crenellated battlements. It has two entrances opposite to each other on the eastern and western sides. The walls are pierced with rows of loopholes,

the uppermost row being in the battlements. The lower row of loopholes slants to the right and commands the high way. It is called a *sarāi* but does not possess any cells. It is more likely that this locality was in those days infested by robbers and this enclosure—more a fortress than a *sarāi*—was built to overawe them and to afford temporary refuge to travellers. It may also be, as the Nāib Tahsildār of Nausherā facetiously remarked, that these smaller *sarāis* (*chhōṭī sarāi*) between the main stages were meant for taking light refreshments (*chhōṭī hāzrī*) in, for the progress of so enormous a cavalcade must have necessarily been very slow and tedious.

Hindu Spring. Near the 7th milestone on the Naushera-Chingas road, on the right side as one goes uphill, is a small spring in a stone basin which is covered by an old niche, built in the Kashmirian style, of massive blocks of stone. The left-hand pilaster and its capital still survive. The right-hand capital has fallen away. The sides of the basin descend in steps like those of the main spring at Chashma-i-shāhī in Srinagar. The whole was originally covered with a thick coat of lime plaster, remnants of which still exist. The cornice of the niche consists of a *cyma recta*. Unfortunately it is now in ruins.

Sarāi at Naryān. Only one jamb of the gateway and the wall on the west side exist. It must have been similar in plan to the one at Nādpur.

CHINGAS.

Sarāi at Chingas. This *sarāi* (Plate Va) is built on a bluff which overlooks the river Tawi. It is an almost exact counterpart of the one at Saidābād, with this difference, however, that the mosque, instead of being outside the enclosure, as it is at Saidābād, here occupies the centre of the cellular quadrangle. In front of it is the reputed tomb of Jahāngīr. It is a mere tumulus of no artistic interest and consists only of a few courses of rubble stone masonry. Tradition reports that the Emperor breathed his last here and for fear of the too rapid decomposition of his corpse his entrails were taken out and buried here. This hallowed spot has since been raised to the status of a shrine by Hindus and Muhammadans alike. Prayer at the tomb is considered eminently efficacious. Childless parents come here to pray for offspring, the sick for the recovery of their health, the poor for riches, the world-weary for divine comfort; and in the local belief, the prayers of all are speedily fulfilled.

The gateway comprises a central chamber with a domed roof and small cells for guards on either side. A narrow flight of steps on each side of the portico gives access to the roof from the interior of the courtyard. The porticoes of the northern row of cells have fallen off bodily, and it is likely that what remains will also perish in the near future, for the everspreading roots of gigantic trees are playing havoc with the masonry. In the middle of the southern row of cells is a platform on which has been built a *dālān* with three chambers, the largest being in the middle. Outside the *sarāi* is a double row of shops, with arched porticoes, on either side of a broad path-way which has two arched entrances at the ends. Nowadays these shops are partly used

by the Police and partly by the Post Office. The huge stone mortices projecting from the masonry for the tenons of the door are specially noticeable.

The entrance (Plate Vb) to the northern court is situated in the middle of the west wall. It is more slenderly proportioned than the entrance to the quadrangle. All the walls of this quadrangle except the one on the east, part of which has fallen down, are in excellent preservation, and but for the trees and shrubs which obstinately thrust their unwelcome roots in all parts of the masonry, would last for centuries more. Both the inner and outer face of the wall are covered with a thick coat of lime plaster, the surface of which is divided into large shallow rectangular panels enclosing cusped arches. The plainness of the surface is relieved by rows of incisions arranged in fishbone patterns. In the centre of this courtyard is a low mound which seems to mark the site of some ancient building. In the middle of the north wall is a *dālān* (Plate VIII d) built on a high plinth containing three chambers similar to those of the *dālān* immediately behind it. There is no intercommunication between the two *dālāns*.

The whole group of buildings is, as remarked above, densely overgrown with jungle which is responsible for the destruction of several parts of it, and it is extremely desirable that the Public Works Department, in whose charge the *sarāi* is, should be asked to cut down the whole vegetation and to excise its roots; otherwise in a few years' time the jungle will get entirely out of hand and do irreparable damage to the entire structure.

CHINGAS TO RAJAURI.

Immediately on leaving Chingas there is an old Hindu *bāoli* with a double basin. Its superstructure has fallen away and been replaced, in later times, by a recess with a pointed arch. There are several other *bāolis* of this type on this road.

MUGHAL REMAINS AT RAJAURI.

The ancient town of Rajauri (Sans. Rājapuri) played a very prominent part in the internal politics of Kashmir in the mediæval age. The *Rājatarāṅgiṇī* mentions it as an important hill principality which at times was dependent on the larger kingdom of Kashmir, but which often proved a troublesome neighbour to the more luxurious and peace-loving monarchs of the Happy Valley. Judging from the narratives of the old chroniclers one would expect the modern town to be full of ancient remains, but a rapid survey revealed nothing except a few architectural fragments (mostly in the Muhalla of Andarkōt) belonging to temples similar to those of Kashmir. These are the only relics of ancient Hindu rule in the once famous town of Rajauri.

The Mughal remains comprise two, possibly three, mosques, a *sarāi*, and a smaller structure of the same type (the modern Tahsīl), a couple of *hammāms* and a garden. The first mosque is situated on the right bank of the Tawi,

a furlong or so below the bridge. Though slightly larger than many other buildings of the same kind on this road, it has like them a façade of only three arches. The three chambers inside are roofed over by domes, the middle one, as usual, being larger than the other two. A narrow stair at the northern end gives access to the roof. It has an enclosed courtyard, with an arched entrance in the north wall and another smaller exit on the river side. The entrance has a double arch with a smaller opening in the middle and two seats on either side in front and behind. The stone mortices of the doorway are extant.

Another mosque of the same type is situated in the bazar to the north of the Tahsīl. This is in a far better state of preservation. At the southern corner there is a small tank for heating water. The lower part of the southern turret still exists. The cusped-arched entrances have been blocked up with rubble stone masonry and fitted with wooden doors. Access to it is obtained from the roof of the shops in front.

Between the mosque first described and the suspension bridge is another mosque possessing a single chamber which may possibly be ascribed to the Mughal period.

The Tahsīl. This seems to have been a structure somewhat like a *sarāi* with cells all round, but it has now completely changed its aspect. A set of rooms has been built on all sides for the accommodation of the Tahsīl offices. The gateway and some fragments of the walls at the corners are all that survives of the original edifice.

Immediately to the south of the Tahsīl and overlooking the river is a small *hammām* consisting of two domed chambers exclusive of the porticoes and passages. It is now used as a Public Works Department workshop.

Sarāi. Like the building now used as the Tahsīl, this *sarāi* has undergone a complete transformation. It is now divided into two sections, one of them being occupied by the local Police and the other by the State Dispensary.

Both the Thāna and the Dispensary have been built in the courtyard, the cells on the front side being used as Police Lines and those on the back as patients' wards. In the renovation of these buildings it is unfortunate that the round Roman arch was substituted for the pointed Saracenic arch, especially as, besides being more graceful, the pointed arch is equally durable. Another regrettable feature of this restoration is the coat of whitewash.

Garden. By far the best preserved and most interesting of all the Mughal remains in Rajauri is the garden (Plate VIa) on the left bank of the river, and a better illustration could scarcely be found of their innate love of gardens, of which the Mughals have given so many proofs. It is hardly to be wondered at that the Emperors spent incredible sums to provide themselves with garden-retreats in the capital cities of Delhi, Agra and Lahore, and in the much-frequented and much-loved summer resorts of Kashmir; but that they should undertake the construction of a by no means inexpensive garden at a wayside station, where at the best of times they could not expect to spend more than a very few days en route to Kashmir, is evidence of far deeper feeling than a

sense of mere personal comfort. The garden is situated on the edge of a plateau overlooking the river. It consists of a walled enclosure, divided into four sections by two channels crossing each other at right angles at the centre. The one running from east to west has all the fountains intact. At the point of intersection of the channels is a raised platform with a tank containing five fountains, arranged in a quincunx. Broad raised foot-paths edged with ashlar dressed stones border the channels on either side. A two storeyed *bāradarī* stands in the middle of the west wall overlooking the river. The upper storey (Plate VIb) has a spacious hall in the middle with two rooms on each side, and is used as a Dak Bungalow. The ground-floor to which access is gained from above by a couple of stairs (one on each side) has only half this accommodation. The ceiling seems to have been originally of wood, for some old carved wooden brackets and capitals are still met with in the hideous wooden ceiling which the later Rājās who succeeded the Mughals put up here, probably after the original ceiling had decayed. In the central hall is a recess which contains a perfectly preserved cascade with a small cistern at its base. Water for this cascade was conducted through a channel from the main course above, and was carried out by a smaller channel which runs through the middle of the hall. The outer walls are surmounted by a cornice which supported long projecting eaves. It is remarkable that the eaves were built of small bricks, and it speaks well for the strength and consistency of the mortar that parts of it still survive the effects of three centuries of good and bad weather. Two flights of steps in the northern and southern walls give admission to the roof. The miniature domes which surmount their upper ends are considerably damaged.

The main entrance to the garden was on the south side, but there were smaller exits also, two in the east wall and one in the north wall. The latter and one of the former have now been closed. The present entrance, which is the only one of the smaller exits now open, seems to have led to the *hammām* just outside the north-east corner of the garden. This last is now used as a Public Works Department workshop. There must have been a number of chambers facing the hillside along the entire length of the east wall in a line with the *hammām*. Only the foundations now exist. In front of these chambers is another enclosed courtyard.

The garden wall has octagonal bastions at the corners. Access to the cells inside is gained through a vestibule which has a façade of three arches with a stair on each side leading up to the roof.

The water which fed the fountains was brought from a *nālā* about a mile and a half upstream. For the greater part of its way it is a *kachcha* irrigation channel winding through the fields, but, as it nears the garden, it is carried on a dry stone embankment until within a hundred yards or so of the wall, when the *kachcha* embankment gives place to a *pakka* conduit. The stream finally discharges itself in a cistern from which an earthen pipe enclosed in a *pakka* wall carries the water into the channel which feeds the fountains. The surplus water of the cistern is turned into the fields by a drain in its eastern wall.



LATER REMAINS AT RAJAURI.

Besides the Mughal buildings there are some remains pertaining to the time of the later Rājas of Rajauri. Chief among these are the mosque near the Tahsil, the palaces and the fort. The first is an attempted imitation of the Mughal mosques. It only proves that, however faithful a copy may be, when it is bereft of the inspiration which conceived the original, it invariably falls short of the beauty of its prototype. It is ugly and altogether insignificant. The two palaces which are situated one at each end of the town have nothing to distinguish them architecturally from ordinary village huts except their size. The fort is a small one and is situated on the summit of the hill behind the Dak Bungalow.

RAJAURI TO THANNA.

Three miles above Rajauri is a walled enclosure, locally known as the *sarāi* of Nainsukh ("delight of the eyes"). The walls are pierced with loopholes and the entrances, which are in the middle of the north and south walls, are comparatively small in dimensions. There is reported to be an inscribed stone slab here of the time of Jahāngīr, but this, I am sorry to say, I missed.

A little above this are the ruins of a large square tank which goes by the name of the *Duniā-dā-tālāb*.

Further up is the old Hindu *bāoli* of Dhathā Dhandā which still possesses some crude sculptured stones, one of which depicts a hunting scene, a completely armed horseman with sword and shield chasing a wild animal which appears to be either a boar or a bear.

About seven miles above Rajauri is the *sarāi* of Sāj built on the summit of a hillock and commanding a splendid prospect. Like the one mentioned above it is a mere walled enclosure, the only difference being that its walls are not pierced with loopholes and that its entrances are of larger dimensions. Both the gateways have two narrow stairs, one on each side, which give admission to the roof.

Just at the foot of the track which leads from this *sarāi* to the highroad below is situated the "*Lirān wālī bāoli*" ("well of clothes"). Its right wall bears a couple of horsemen fully accoutred following each other, and its left a clumsy Śiva Liṅga. Such *bāolis* are frequently met with on this road, but almost all of them have lost their sculptured panels, not improbably through the excessive zeal of the newly converted Muhammadan population.

THANNA.

The first object which attracts attention as one nears the prosperous village of Thanna is the great Mughal *sarāi*. The Hindu temple and the ugly flat-roofed mud huts of the villagers are not only dwarfed into insignificance themselves, but add immensely to the grandeur of the *sarāi* by contrast.

Like other edifices built at the principal stages on this road, this one also consists of two enclosures, a cellular quadrangle (Plate VIIa) and a plain walled area generally called the 'Ām-Khās. A point of interest in this *sarāi* is the existence of a couple of *dālāns* opposite to each other in the northern and

southern walls. They have a façade of three arches, the middle one being closed at the top and pierced lower down with three smaller arched openings. The central chamber has a wagon-vaulted ceiling. The wall surfaces were originally covered with a coat of lime plaster, which in its turn served as the background for a finer coat of paint of various colours. This is still in a good state of preservation in the outermost chamber of the *hammām* which occupies the north-east corner of the *sarāi*. The dado has a dark red background with a bluish border. The upper part of the wall surface is divided into a series of shallow decorated niches. The painted floral borders are better preserved.

The *hammām* has three large chambers, exclusive of the passages. These chambers open into one another. The openings at the tops of the two outer domes are octagonal. One of them still possesses the covering stone slabs.

The gateways, consisting of large domed chambers in the middle with arched recesses at the sides and porticoes in front and behind are very plain, but, even in their present state of dilapidation, are singularly dignified specimens of Mughal architecture. On either side of each gateway is a narrow stair which gives access to the roof.

A number of butchers have unfortunately been allowed by the Public Works Department to occupy certain chambers in this *sarāi*.

The second enclosure is in utter ruin.

Hindu bāolis at Thanna and in the surrounding villages. A few yards to the north-east of the Thanna Dak Bungalow are a couple of *bāolis* similar to those described above and bearing sculptured friezes containing a procession of armed horsemen, etc. There is another *bāoli* to the south-west of the Dak Bungalow, but it underwent a complete transformation during some repairs executed a hundred years or so ago. It may here be noted that these so-called *bāolis* are natural springs jutting out from the hillside with small unpretentious recesses or alcoves to cover them and stepped basins to hold the water. Sometimes the walls of these alcoves are covered with sculpture in low relief displaying very crude workmanship, indicative of the low ebb which Hindu plastic art had reached in these regions in later centuries (Plate VIIIc).

The village of Shāh-darā possesses five such *bāolis*, the one above the Khān-qāh being the best preserved of all. In this *bāoli* the water flows from a spout shaped like a tiger's head projecting from the middle of the back wall. Fragments of stunted fluted columns still exist. The upper panels are carved with figures of gods, goddesses, votaries, warriors with swords and shields, and a bowman shooting an arrow. The lower panel is plain except for crude lozenges, carved at intervals. Like many other *bāolis*, it has a double basin, the water of the first emptying into the second. Remains of miniature decorative outer niches (perhaps meant for placing lamps in) are extant in the side walls of the basin. The fluted columns and carved pedimental niches show that the influence of Kashmir art was not altogether dead in these parts even in the 16th and 17th centuries, to which period these *bāolis* may on artistic grounds be safely assigned.

The other *bāolīs* have been more or less completely altered, some of them, so ruthlessly, that the sculptured friezes have been embedded in pavements. Perhaps this was done with a purpose, for a zealous Muhammadan, to whom the sight of an image is an abomination, could not better gratify his spite against the hated idol than by using it as a stepping stone.

A small mosque has been built over one of the *bāolīs* here.

The village of Asplōt also has five *bāolīs*, all of them being almost completely ruined. Alāl boasts of a dozen, only four of which bear carvings of any sort. The list of *bāolīs* might be added to almost *ad infinitum*, but it would be a fruitless task.

A curious fact is the frequent occurrence of the horsemen frieze (Plate VIIIa) on these *bāolīs*, the riders as well as their chargers being fully panoplied.

RAJAURI TO PANJNARA.

The country is hilly and very sparsely populated. There is nothing of antiquarian interest except the *bāolīs* which dot the roadside here and there. The district seems to be specially rich in springs.

PANJNARA.

The Brahman hamlet of Panjnārā consists of a few insignificant-looking huts, so few, indeed, that they seem barely able to withstand the inroads of the rank vegetation around them, and situated so far apart that they scarcely break the dreary monotony of the endless wilderness of scrub and jungle which stretches on all sides as far as the eye can reach. But that Panjnārā was not always the tiny settlement that it is now, is shown by a remarkable group of monuments, which, choked up as they are and split asunder by vegetation, are doomed to certain destruction, unless immediate steps are taken to exterminate the growth, root and branch. Wherever the ploughshare strikes the ground, ancient potsherds turn up, and the long ridge to the north of the temple is one mass of innumerable sherds. At least two mediæval structures and a well belonging to the same age are found close to each other on this ridge.

In the fields opposite, on the south side of the *nālā*, one espies from a distance a number of massive stone blocks which on nearer inspection turn out to be a part of the plinth of a temple belonging to the 9th or 10th century A.D. Close to these is the defaced figure of a tiger, seated on a pedestal or column which is at present buried underground. But the chief interest of the place centres in the magnificent temple (Plate VIIb)—locally known as the Pāṇḍu-Kuṇḍ—which is unique in the province of Jammu and rivals in grandeur the best preserved temples of the valley of Kashmir. The gateway faces east, the internal measurements of the peristyle, which consists of 53 cells (Plate VIIIc) and the gateway, are 191 feet by 121 feet. Almost the whole superstructure of the central shrine has fallen down; but the double

basement, though buried under the *débris* of the demolished superstructure, appears to be intact. There is a well at the south-east corner of the courtyard. The temple reproduces in every respect the architectural features of the temples of Kashmir, which have so often and so well been described that it is needless to give a detailed description of this edifice. Suffice it to say that, if the temple were to be suddenly transplanted by the side of the Buniār temple one would scarcely notice any marked difference between the two structures either in shape or size, disposition of parts or massiveness of construction, except that this temple has no colonnade. I, therefore, assign it to about the same date as that temple, namely the 9th or 10th century A.D. This date is perhaps corroborated by the discovery by Mansā Rām, the Pūjārī of the temple, of a couple of Kashmir coins (one silver and the other copper) in the adjacent fields. The silver coin is of Jayāpīḍa-Vinayāditya (8th century A.D.) and the copper coin of Harsha (A.D. 1089-1101).

The copper coinage of Harsha is common in Kashmir, and a few silver coins of Vinayāditya have been found at Parihāsapura, between Srinagar and Paṭan. The discovery of these ancient remains as well as the fortunate find of Kashmir coins show that, even in those centuries when Kashmir was torn and mangled by internecine warfare, its suzerainty over these parts was still real and substantial.

PHERE-DA-KOT.

Perhaps it is worth while to make mention, in passing, of the Rānī of Phērē-dā-kōṭ, who was either contemporary with or possibly somewhat anterior to the late Maharaja Raṇbīr Singh of Kashmir. A Hindu by faith, she married the Muhammadan Rājā of Phērē-dā-kōṭ. She it was who repaired all the *bāolīs* on the way between Siālsui and Dharmśāl. She also built the flight of steps on both sides of the hill known as the Phērē-dā-kōṭ. Of all the *bāolīs* the best preserved is the one which she built on the hill itself only a few furlongs below her little fortified residence, which crowns its summit.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS.

To sum up the results of my twenty days' tour in the Tahsīls of Bhimbar and Rajauri: the discovery or rather the re-discovery of a number of Mughal *sarāīs* and mosques constitute a welcome addition to the monumental treasures of Kashmir; but a discovery of still greater importance is the existence of the groups of Kashmirian temples at Saidābād and Pānjnār. Fergusson wrote,¹ "We now know sufficiently the form and the age of the Gandhara monasteries to supply most of the missing links connecting the Kashmiri style with that of the outer world; but till the temples in the Salt Range and other little frequented parts of the Punjab are examined we shall not know all we desire." I hope that the temples described above will go some way, at least, to satisfy the

¹ History of Indian and Eastern Architecture, Vol. I, p. 270.

want expressed by Fergusson and felt by all antiquarians interested in the ancient art of Kashmir. "Though not magnificent they [the temples] are very pleasing and appropriate examples of art and they have this advantage over most of the Indian styles, that Kashmir possesses in the Rājatarāṅinī, what may be said to be the only Indian history in existence."¹

¹ History of Indian and Eastern Architecture, Vol. I, p. 271.

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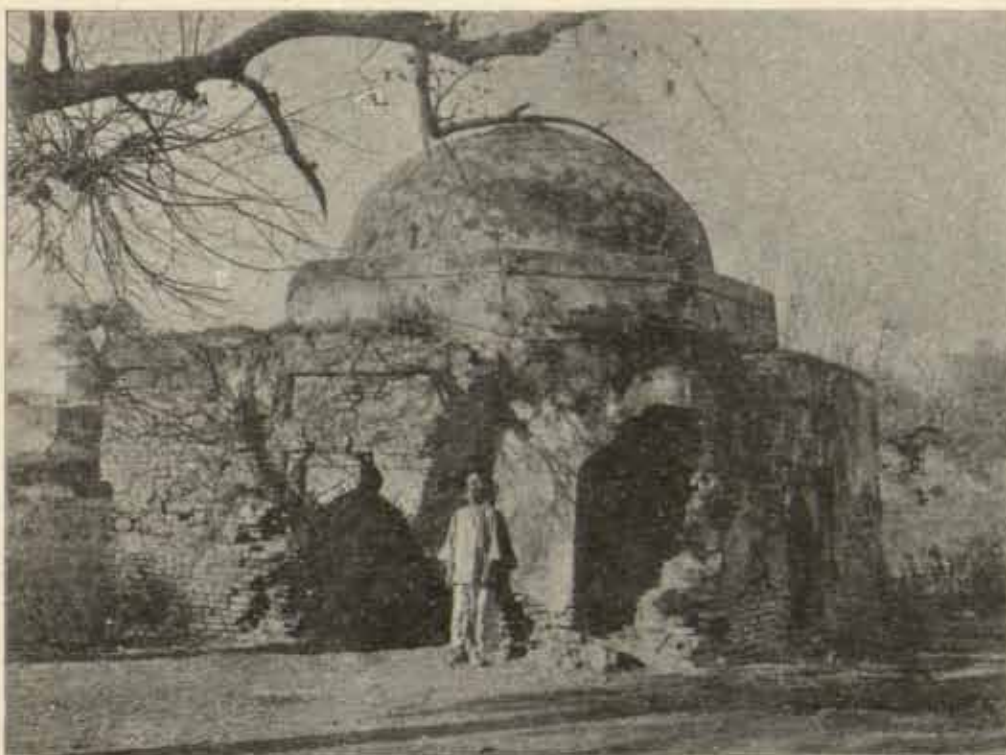
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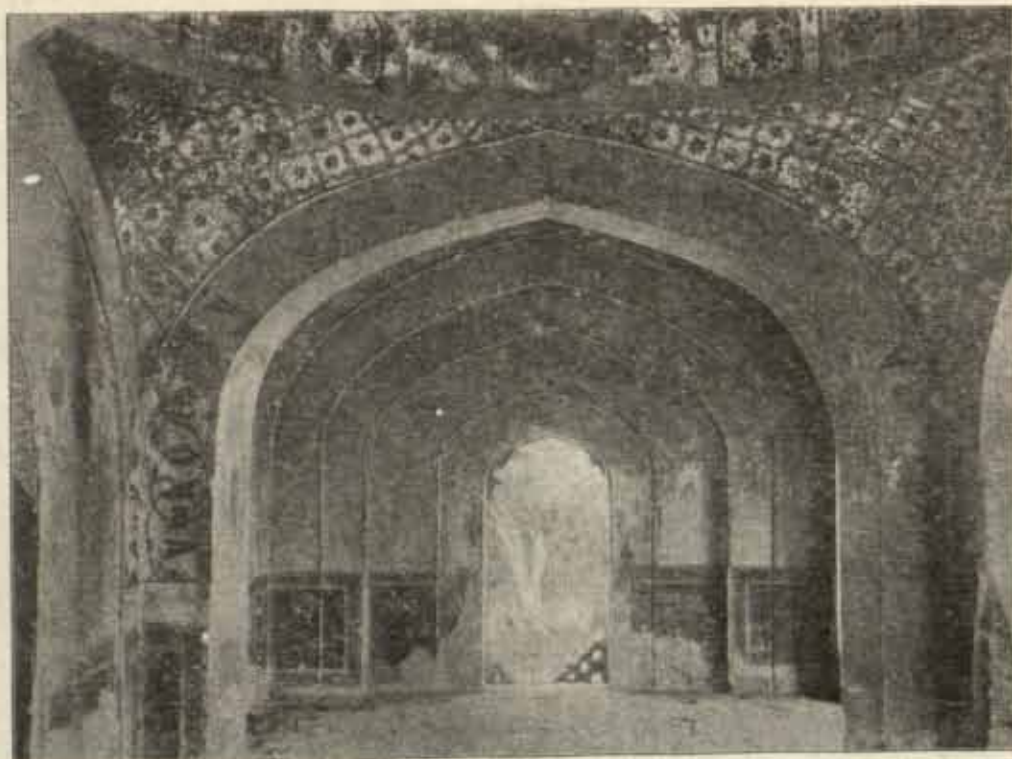


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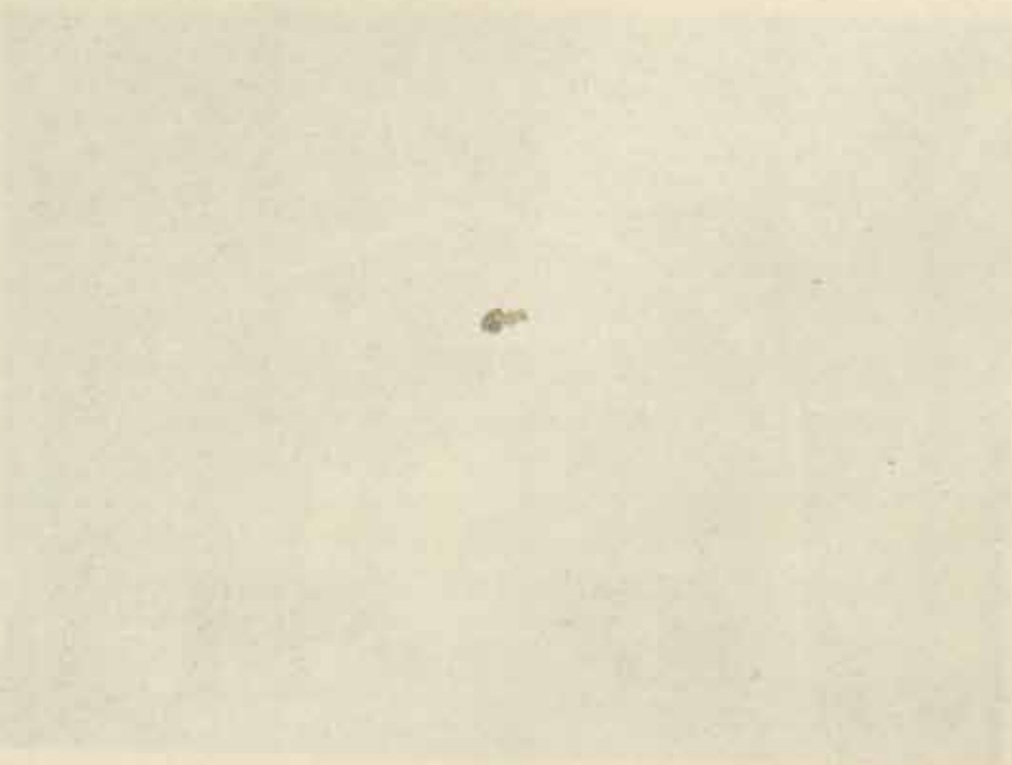
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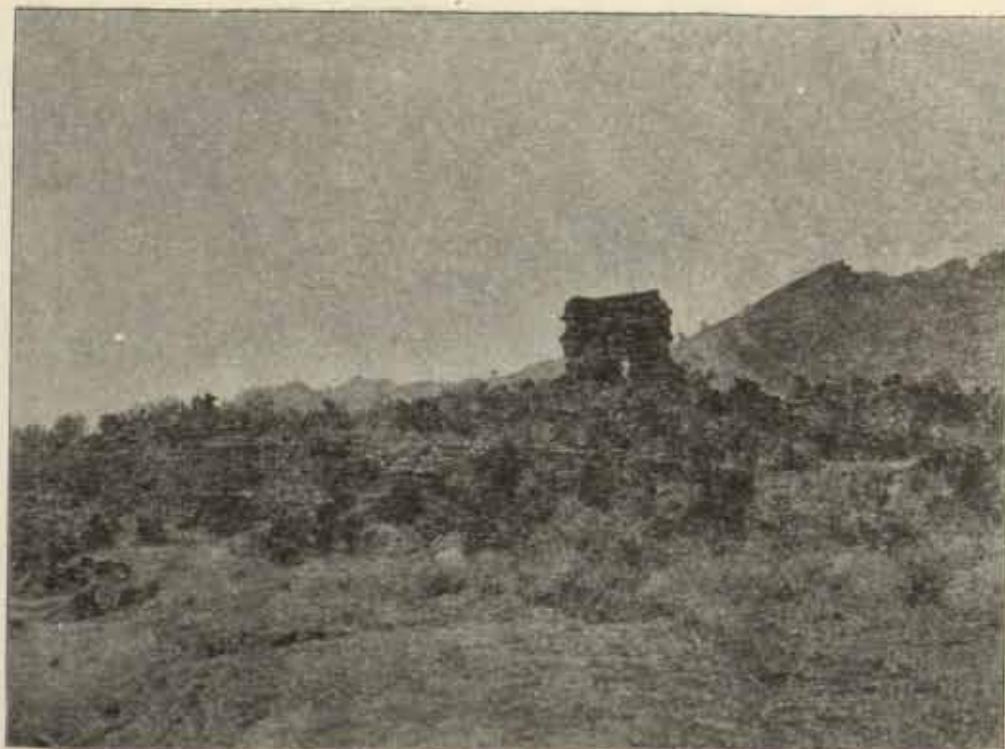
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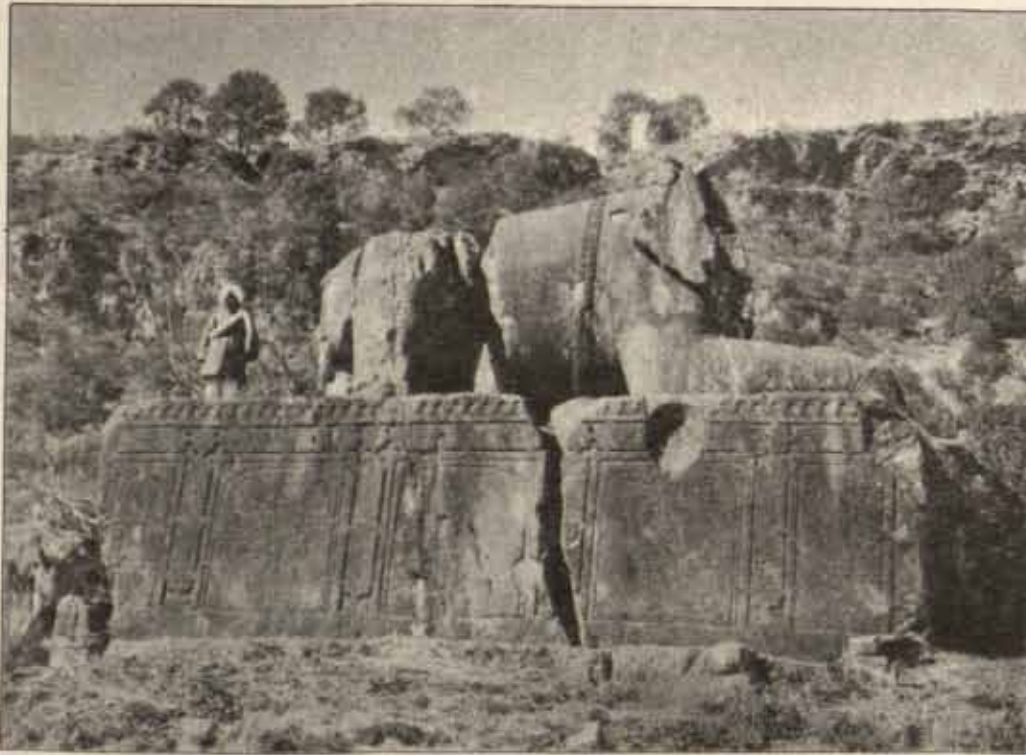


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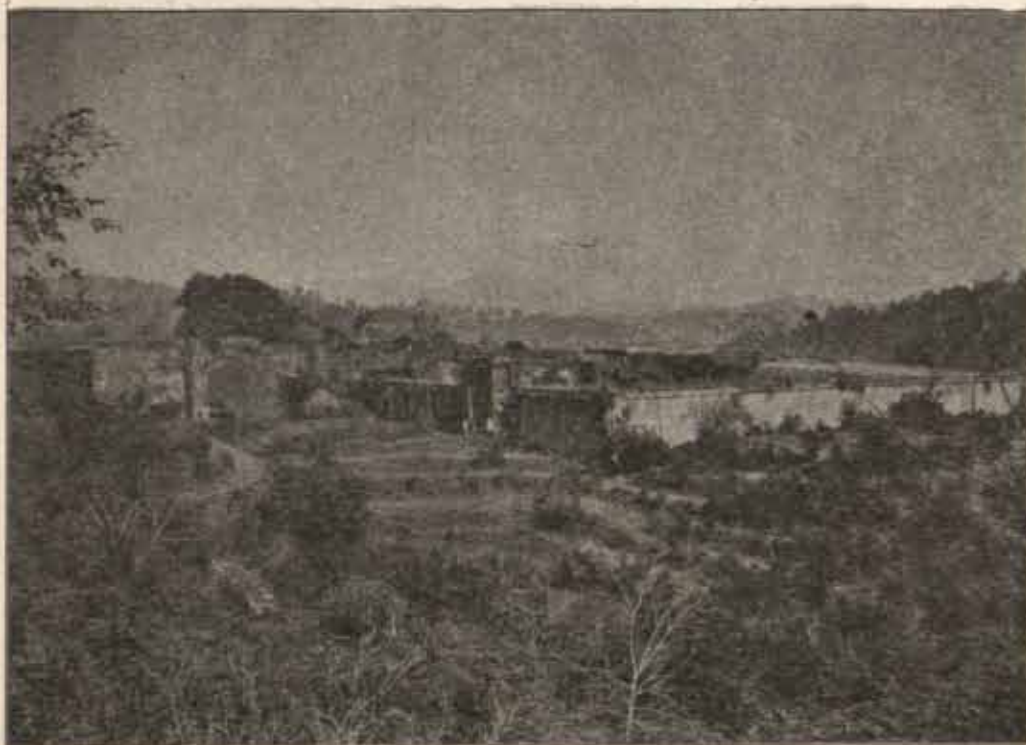


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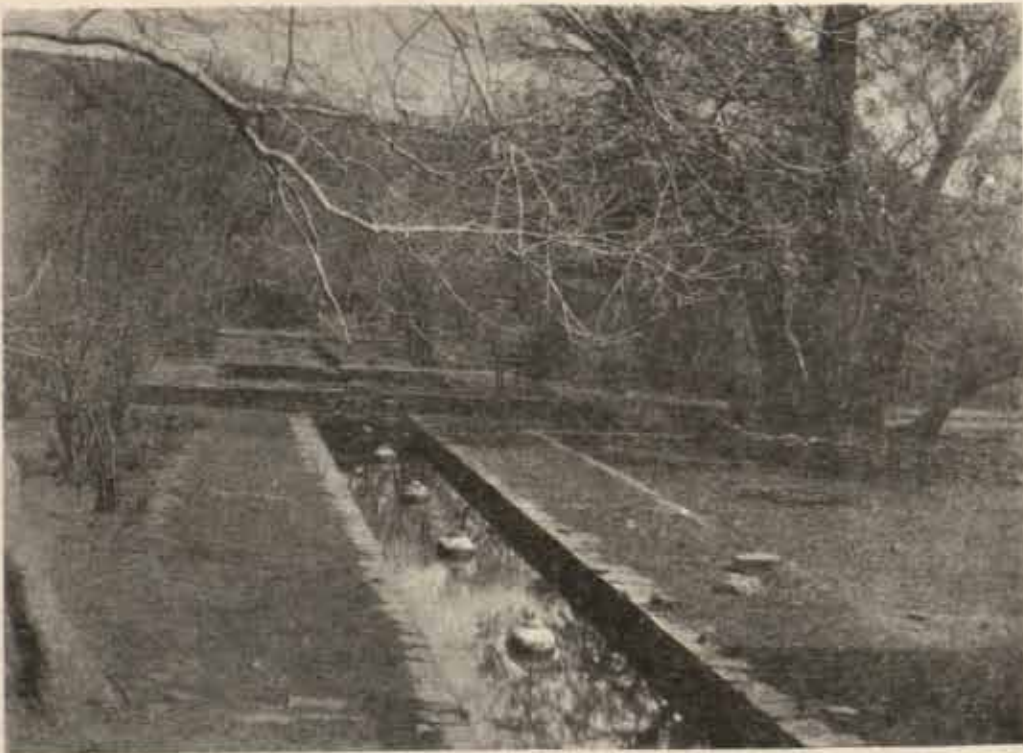
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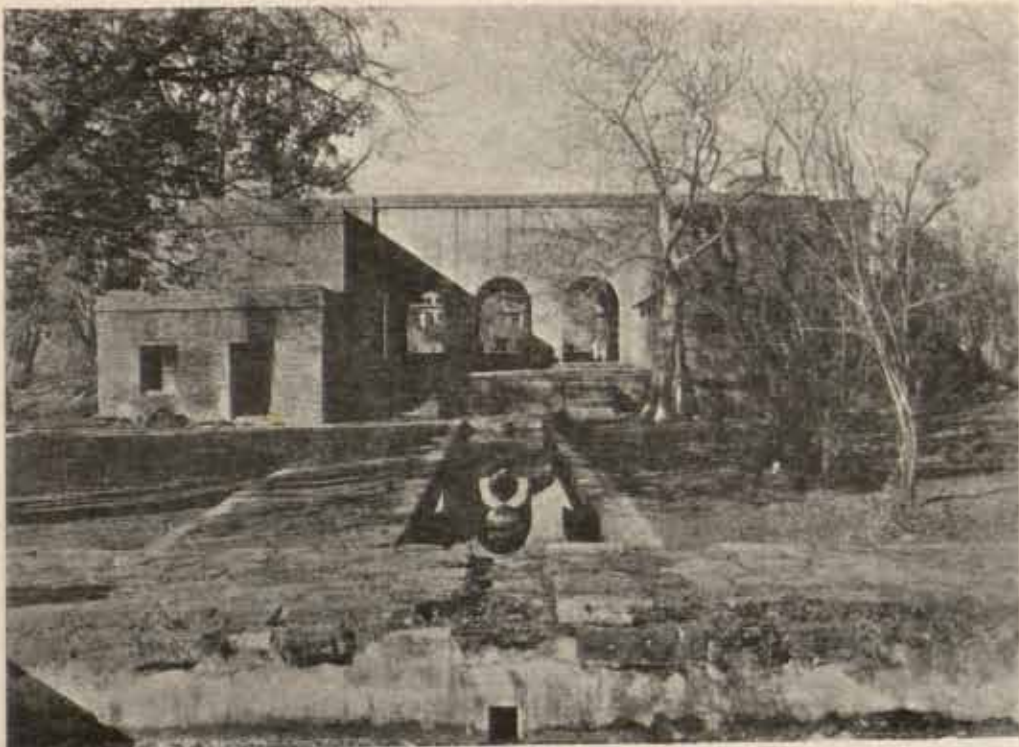
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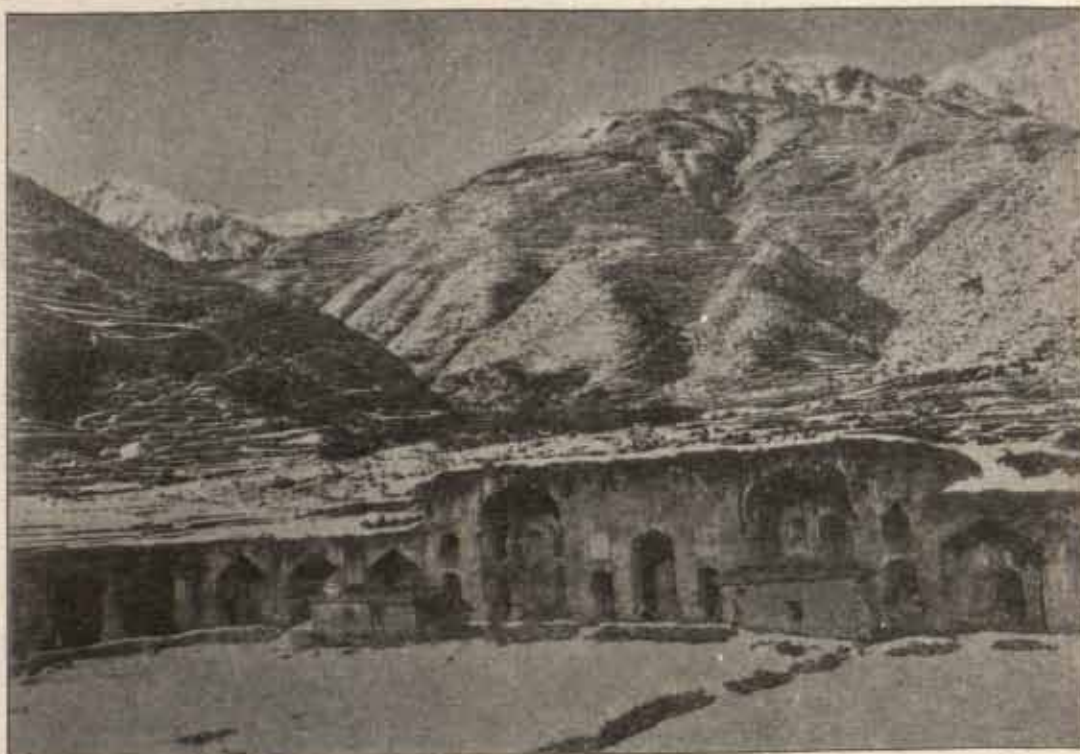


a. RAJAURI: THE MUGHAL GARDEN: GENERAL VIEW OF THE INTERIOR SHOWING THE CHANNELS AND FOUNTAINS.

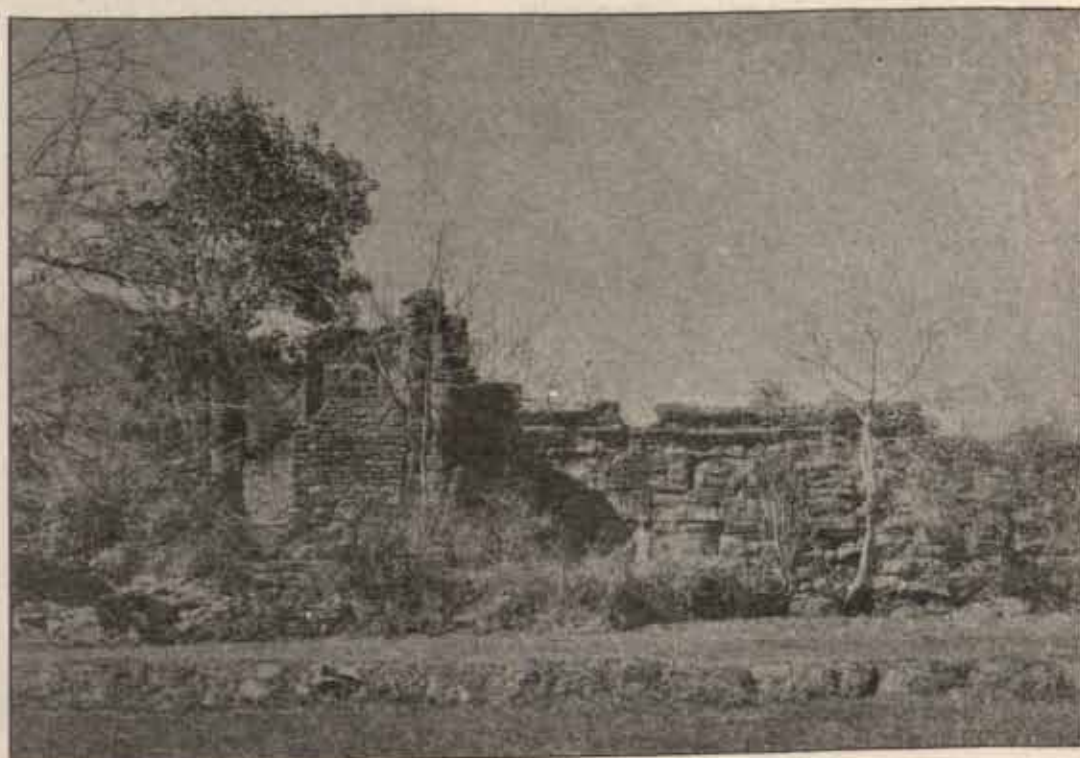


b. RAJAURI: THE MUGHAL GARDEN: VIEW SHOWING THE HARADARI WITH THE MODERN ADDITIONS AND ALTERATIONS.

ANTIQUITIES OF RHIMBAR AND RAJAURI.

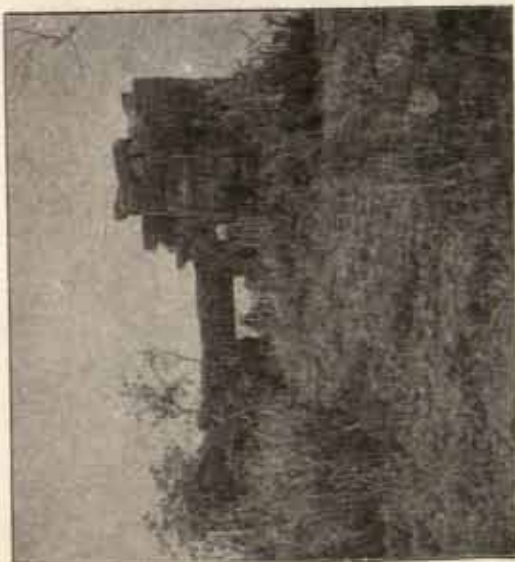


a. THANNA: THE MUGHAL SARAI; VIEW SHOWING THE *dolm* AND THE SNOW CLAD HILLS.

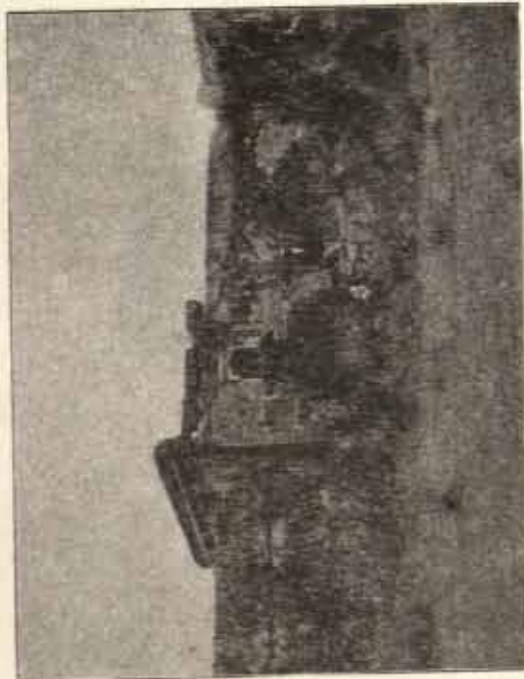


b. PANJNARA: MEDIEVAL TEMPLE; GATEWAY.

ANTIQUITIES OF BHIMBAR AND RAJAURI.



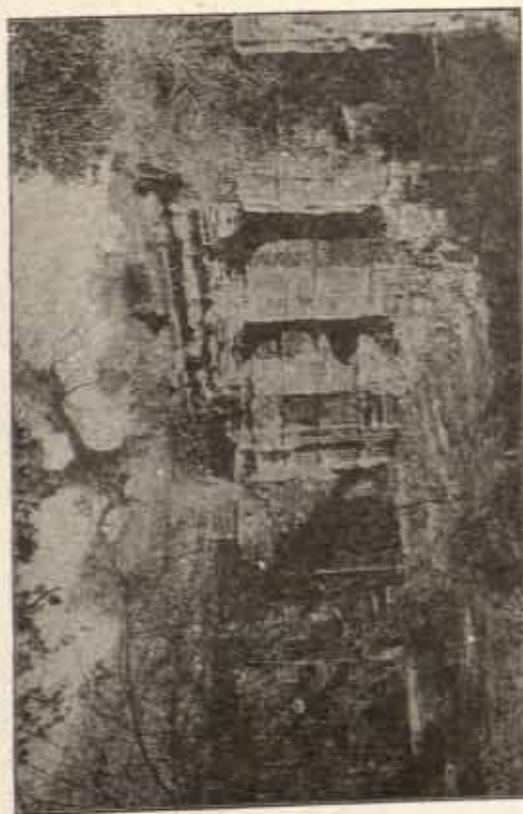
b. SAIDABAD: THE MEDIEVAL TEMPLE (B); GENERAL VIEW.



d. CHINGAI: THE MUGNAI SARAI; 1000m IN THE NORTHERN COURT.

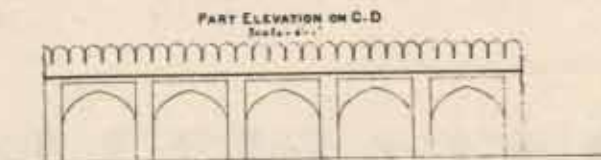
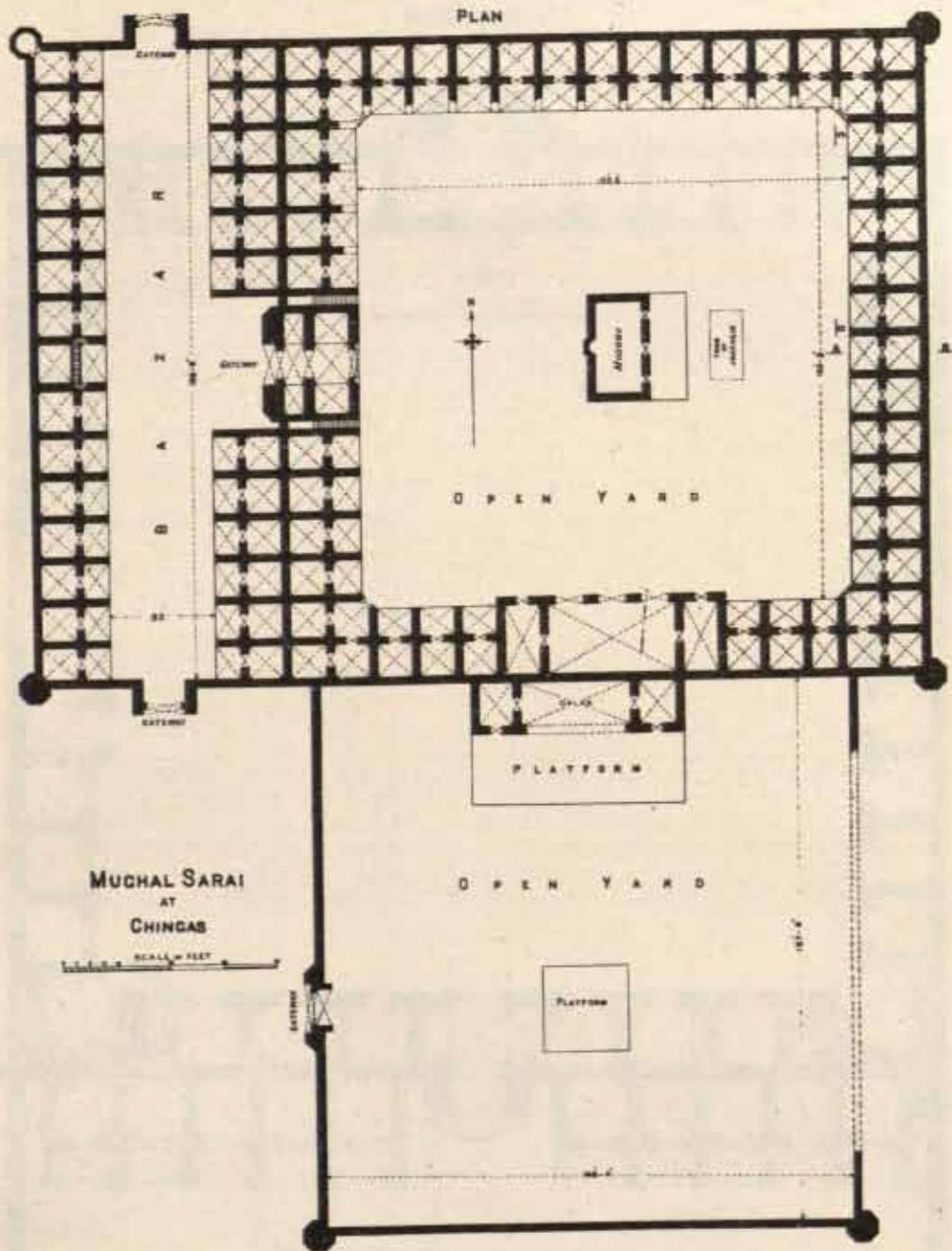


c. TANTRA: HOUSES FREE ON THE WALLS OF A HINDU TEMPLE.

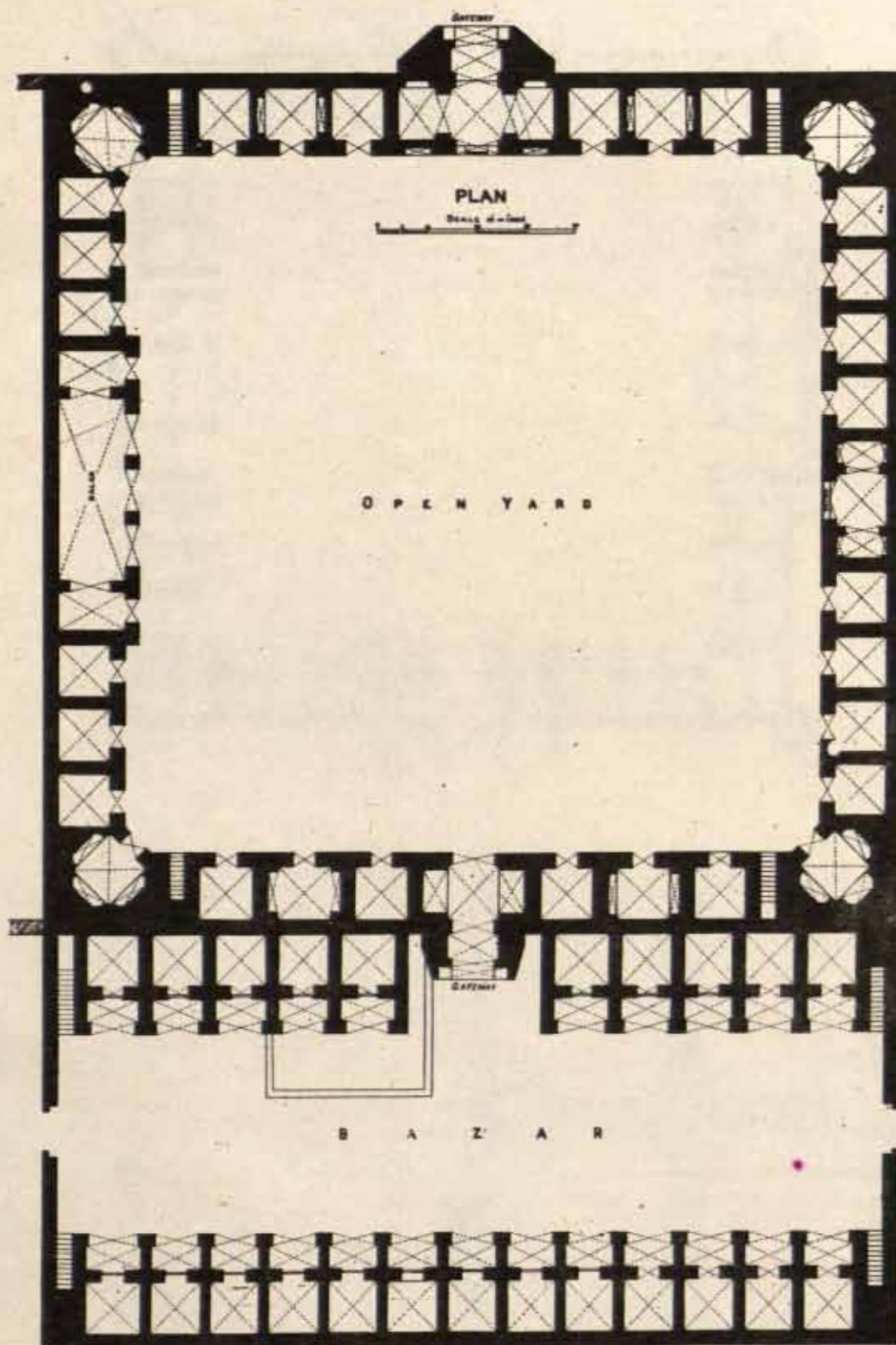


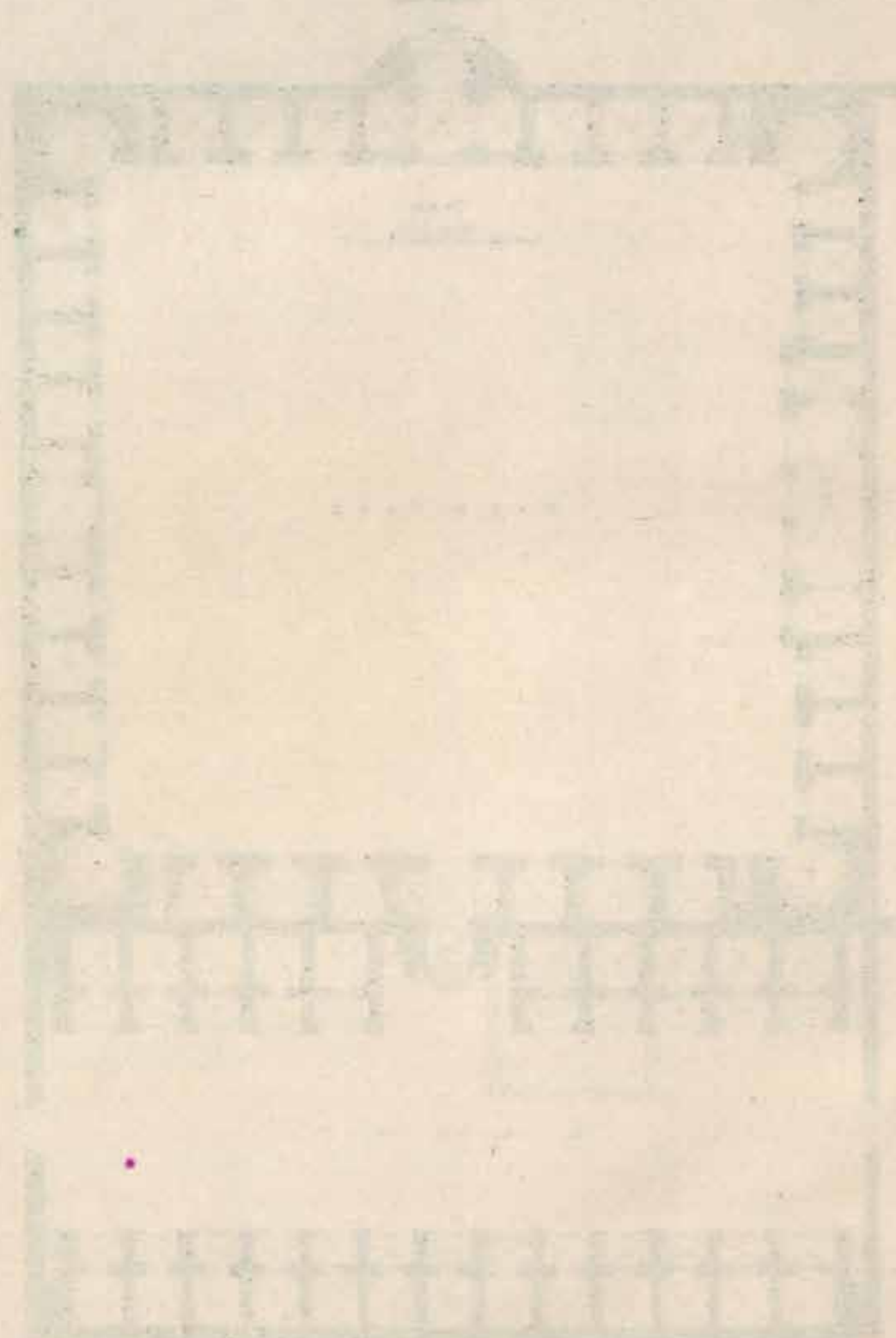
f. PAINSARA: THE MEDIEVAL TEMPLE; VIEW OF CELL.

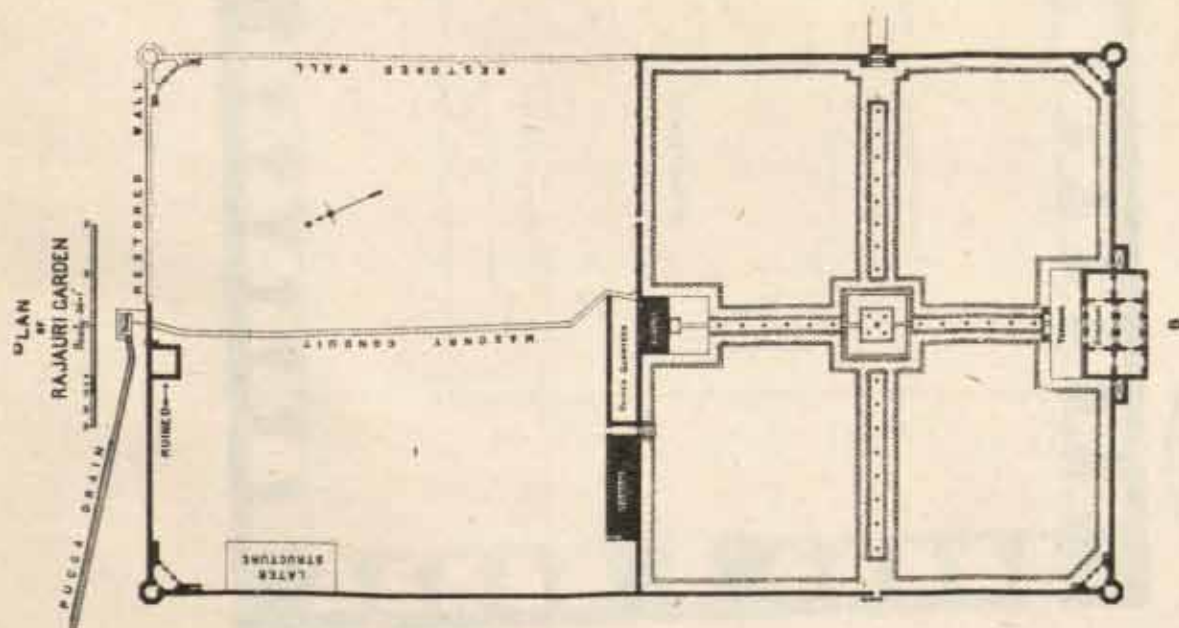
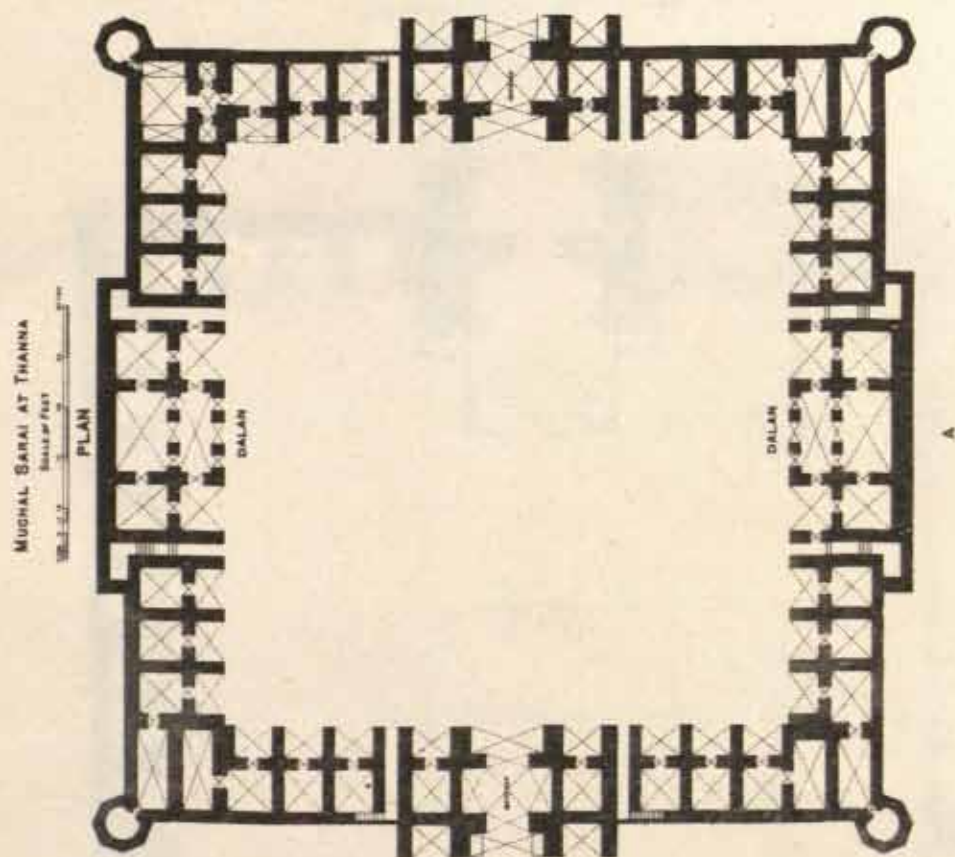
Photomicrograph of a portion of the temple of the temple of India, Chingai, 1000.



MUGHAL SARAI
AT
SAIDABAD



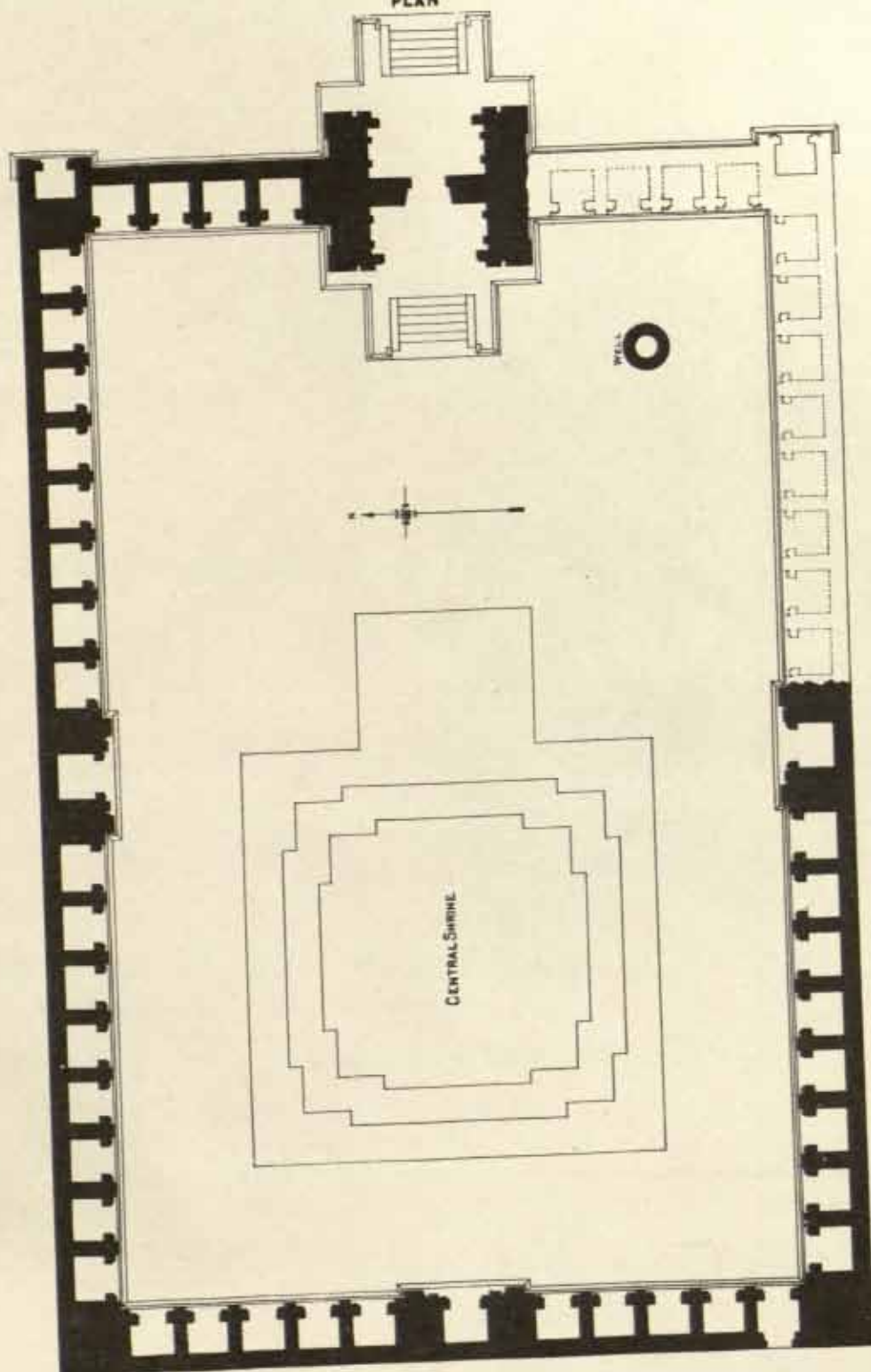




TEMPLE AT PANJNARA

SCALE = 8 FT. 1 INCH

PLAN



82793



CATALOGUE

"A book that is shut is but a block"

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